

**Sample Letter 9: Informing the School that You Intend to
Place Your Child in a Private School at Public Expense**

Street Address
City, State, Zip Code
Month, Date, Year

Name of Principal or Administrator
Name of School
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear (Principal's or Administrator's name),

My son/daughter, (child's name), is a special education student in the (_) grade, in (name of teacher)'s class at (name of school). Recently, I attended a meeting to determine (child's name)'s school placement. I am writing to inform you that I reject the proposed placement for (child's name), and intend to enroll him/her in a private school at public expense. At the most recent IEP meeting, held on (date), I informed the other team members of my decision.

The reasons for my decision are as follows: (keep this section brief, list specifics for why you believe the public school placement is *not* appropriate for your child).

(Child's name) will be attending (name of private school) effective (date).

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I can be reached at (give your phone number). Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Your name

cc: your child's principal (if letter is addressed to an administrator)
your child's teacher(s)

Informing the School that You Intend to Enroll Your Child in a

Private School at Public Expense

What do I do if I think my child's placement should be in a private school?

In a very few cases, the most appropriate placement for a child is in a private school. When this placement decision is made by the public school IEP team or placement group, the public school pays the cost of the private school. Sometimes a parent may feel that a recommended public school placement is not appropriate for his or her child. The parent may reject that placement and decide to enroll his or her child in a private school. If you find yourself facing this decision *and* you want the public school to reimburse you for the cost of the private school, there are several things you need to know.

1. A court or a hearing officer may require the school district to reimburse you if the court or hearing officer decides that:

(a) the public school did not make FAPE available prior to your child's enrollment in the private school, and (b) the private placement is appropriate.

2. Your request for reimbursement may be reduced or denied if before enrolling your child in the private school:

(a) at the most recent IEP meeting, you did not inform the school that you reject the proposed placement and intend to enroll your child in a private school at public expense, and

(b) at least 10 business days prior to removing your child from the public school, you did not give the school written notice. (For more information please see Question #28 in NICHCY's publication called *Questions and Answers about IDEA*), which may be found at web site <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/newsdig/nd21txt.htm>.

Once you have sent the letter to the school, you will also need to make a request for a due process hearing so that a hearing officer can decide whether or not the public school must reimburse you for the costs of the private school. See the section on due process in Sample Letter #10 of this packet.